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Using Your Values and Goals

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You may want to overcome public speaking anxiety, but that is only an achievable goal if you are willing to take action. The only way to confront fear is to engage in a situation that provokes it.

In other words, if you want to become a better and more self-confident public speaker, you have to leave your comfort zone and stand tall in front of an audience. Naturally, we all find it easier to focus on our desire to change, rather than take the necessary measures to change, but certainly, you are motivated and strong enough to pursue a better you!

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Quiz Time!

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Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2

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Why Do You Want It?

As you read this, it is easy to presume that your goal is to overcome a fear of public speaking. If we ask you what you want to accomplish, you may say: „I want to be a better/more self-confident public speaker.”

Now try to answer these questions:

- Why do you want to become better in public speaking? What will that bring to you?
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Are you going to be a better person? Or a better student, or employee?

- Will you be happier?
- Will your life become more meaningful?
- Will your life become more fulfilling?
- Would others respect you or like you more?

The Role of Values

If you, for example, want to overcome your fear because you find that it is important to grow as a person, improve your skills and knowledge, but the fear is making it difficult, then we are no more talking about your goals. We are talking about values.

Values are what we truly care about, and they are similar to our core beliefs. As they are the force, which motivates our behavior, when we live following what we actually stand for, we create a chance to be happy and content with ourselves.

If your goal is to be a better public speaker, notice how values are broader than goals - you can overcome your fear because you care about being a successful individual, or because you want to develop your skills and resilience to stressful situations, such as public speaking.

Where Does Your Goal Fit in?

Values have several life domains, such as personal and in relation other people (friends and family, parenting, social relations); educational or personal growth; health and physical wellbeing; employment; recreation; spirituality; citizenship/community. Overcoming fear of public speaking can be the goal within several of these domains, such as personal growth, education, or employment.

Discover Your Values

Every individual has a set of their own, values, which they have formed over time, with the help of experiences, the environment, other people, and inner world events. You can identify your personal values, by discovering what you want to be.

For example, you may say, "I want to be successful in my career and have a job that I truly love", or, "I want to be a valuable part of a team, so that others can rely on me and appreciate me". As you can probably see, coping with public performance anxiety is just one piece of the puzzle – one of the things that will contribute and will help you accomplish what you actually want and care about.

Value-Based Goals

Values guide us through life. If we have a goal to accomplish, we should think about how achieving the goal will bring us closer to the person we want to be.

You can create your plan for setting value-based goals, by adhering to a few simple steps.

The first step to focus on is choosing a life domain you want to work on. It could be anything that you believe would satisfy you and make you feel happier. Some examples are personal growth or relationships with others. Make sure you concentrate on one domain at a time. Otherwise your attention and behavior may become fragmented, rather than helpful and structured.

SMART Goals

Once you have chosen the life domain you will first work with, the second step is to make your goals SMART. Here's what the acronym means:

S - Specific

For example, "I want to be a better public speaker" is too vague of a goal. You can separate large goals into smaller portions, that are easier to achieve one by one, until you reach the big goal. So, to create a goal that is as specific as possible, ask yourself the 5 questions, that start with "W": What? Why? Who? When? Where? Which?

M - Measurable

How would you know when you have successfully achieved your goal and worked for your values? It is very difficult to assess your progress, without having any objective criteria for measuring it. In order to provide yourself with a clear sense of progress and an understanding of what it is that you need to how on, ask yourself questions that measure the quantity and quality of your goal, such as "How much?", "How often?", "How big?", "How many?". For instance, if you rate your fear of public speaking on a scale of 1-100, that can be one of your measurement criteria.

A - Achievable

A struggle that most of us have faced, at least once or twice in our lives, is setting goals that are unrealistic. Even though the goals are unachievable, we are disappointed when the inevitable happens and our motivation is decreased. That does not mean that there are goals that are too big for you! However, it does mean that you should break large goals into smaller, easily achievable steps.

R - Relevant

This domain is concerned with setting goals that really are important to you and correspond to your core values. There is no point in wasting time with goals that are only superficially important and would not actually make a difference for the better in your life. Relevant goals

may be the more difficult ones, since they affect you on a deeper level, but they are also the ones worth engaging in. Whenever you set a goal, as yourself the questions that you found the six questions, found at the beginning of this page completed by your own.

T - Time-framed

Having a goal, without a time-frame, is not helpful, because you won't be as motivated to put in constructive, systematic effort, into achieving your goal. Take some time, and create a schedule for yourself, that is realistic, and is separated into the stages of goal-completion, which you have previously set. Work hard to observe your time-frame.

All Goals in Due Time

Your values-based goals can have different time frames. For example, you can set an immediate goal (such as "I will try out one of the techniques for overcoming a fear of public speaking I learned about"), and you can accomplish it within the next 24 hours. You can also create short-term goals you'll achieve in the next few days or a couple of weeks; medium-term goals (for the next few weeks or months); and long-term goals (for the next few months and years).

Remember that goals can be numerous - we can set as many goals as we want, but the essence is that these goals are guided by what we stand for and care about.

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